

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /022 W
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R 171057Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9983
CNO
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
CINCPAC
CINCPACFLT
COMIDEASTFOR
AMCONSUL KARACHI

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 1725

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PK, US, MORG
SUBJECT: SHIP VISITS

1. WE ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE DRAMATIC INCREASE IN NUMBER OF PORT VISITS BY USN SHIPS TO PAKISTAN AND THE RESULTING GREATER USE OF PIER SPACE IN KARACHI PORT. FOR ALL OF 1976, SIXTEEN USN SHIPS VISITED KARACHI. SO KXR THIS YEADSN 10 SHIPS WILL HAVE VISITED BY MARCH SIX. IN 1976, THERE WERE OR MORE USN SHICX BERTHED ALONGSIDE A PIER IN KARACHI HARBOR FOR 47 DAYS. THE COMPARABLE FIGURE FOR THIS YEAR THROUGH MARCH 6 IS 35 DAYS. IN OTHER WORDS, AFTER SLIGHTLY MORE THAN TWO MONTHS, WE WILL HAVE HAD OVER 60 PER CENT OF THE NUMBER OF SHIPS VISITING AS WE DID IN ALL OF 1976 AND HAVE USED ALMOST 75 PER CENT OF ALL THE PIER TIME WE DID IN 1976.

2. THE GOP AND PAK NAVY HAVE BEEN VERY COOPERATIVE SO FAR IN MEETING OUR REQUESTS FOR DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE AND LOGISTICS SUPPORT FREQUENTLY ON VERY SHORT NOTICE. ALSO, THE GOP UNDOUBTEDLY BENEFITS FROM USN SHIP VISITS, BOTH AS PROOF OF US INTEREST IN PAKISTAN'S SECURITY AND CONFIRMATION THAT WE VIEW THE SOVIET
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PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A THREAT. THE PORT ALSO BENEFITS FROM SOME VISITS WHEN MAINTENANCE WORK IS DONE ON THE SHIPS.

3. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THERE IS A POINT AT WHICH THE PROBLEMS FOR THE GOP EMANATING FROM THE AMOUNT OF TIME WE SPEND IN KARACHI PORT OUTWEIGH THE BENEFITS. WE ALSO THINK THAT WE HAVE, IF WE CONTINUE AT THE SAME FREQUENCY OF TIME IN PORT, REACHED THAT

POINT. WE HAVE TWO DISTINCT CONCERNS, ONE POLITICAL AND THE OTHER ECONOMIC. A MAIN POLITICAL LIABILITY TO THE GOP OF OUR VISITS IS THAT EVERY TIME ONE OF OUR SHIPS VISITS, THE RUSSIANS OFTEN ASK PERMISSION FOR A SHIP VISIT AND THE GOP FEELS IT MUST CONCUR. THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY UNHAPPY WITH AN INCREASING NUMBER OF RUSSIAN SHIPS IN PORT. EQUALLY IMPORTANT, THE GOP MUST KEEP IN MIND ITS INTEREST IN BEING A RESPECTED MEMBER OF THE THIRD WORLD AND MUST AVOID AN INCREASINGLY HIGH PROFILE OF AMERICAN SHIPS BERTHED IN ITS ONLY MAJOR PORT.

4. THERE ARE REAL ECONOMIC LOSSES TO THE GOP WHEN OUR SHIPS BERTH AT KARACHI HARBOR. COMMERCIAL PIER SPACE, WHICH IS GIVEN TO THE USN GRATIS, COSTS ABOUT \$3000 PER DAY. THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY ILLEGAL PAYMENTS WHICH ARE ALSO MADE. ALSO, THE LONGER USN SHIPS USE PIER SPACE, THE MORE DELAYED ARE SHIPMENTS OF COMMERCIAL GOODS INTO THE COUNTRY WITH A CONSEQUENT DELAY IN VARIOUS COMMERCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISES. IN PURELY FINANCIAL TERMS, THE USN MAY HAVE USED AS MUCH AS \$141,000 WORTH OF PIER TIME LAST YEAR PLUS DELAYS CAUSED IN COMMERCIAL IMPORTS DUE TO INCREASED PORT CONGESTION.

5. WE ARE ALSO CONCERNED BY THE FACT THAT WE HAVE NEVER HAD SENT TO US ONE COMPREHENSIVE, COORDINATED LIST OF SCHEDULED INDIAN OCEAN SHIP VISITS OR NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS WHICH MIGHT ENTAIL CALLS AT KARACHI AND OTHER LOGISTIC SUPPORT - INCLUDING USE OF ANY GOP FACILITIES. THERE SEEM TO BE SEVERAL PLACES IN THE USG WHICH MAKE DECISIONS ON SHIP VISITS, DEPENDING ON THE COMMAND INVOLVED AND THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT, AND THAT WE ARE INFORMED HAPHAZARDLY AND OFTEN LONG AFTER THE SCHEDULE HAS BEEN DECIDED ELSEWHERE.

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IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE INTRODUCE BETTER COORDINATION AND LOOK TOWARD REATIONALIZATION OF SHIP VISIT SCHEDULING. IN VIEW OF THIS CONCERN, AND THE PROBLEMS MENTIONED ABOVE ON THE FREQUENCY OF VISITS, WE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 1725

6. FIRST, THAT WE BE SENT, WITHIN THE NEXT MONTH, A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEDULE FOR ALL KNOWN SHIP VISITS AND DEPLOYMENTS TO THE INDIAN OCEAN WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE CALLS IN KARACHI OR OTHER GOP SUPPORT FOR THIS CALENDAR YEAR. THE LIST SHOULD BE UPDATED AS NECESSARY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. AT THE END OF EVERY YEAR, WE SHOULD RECEIVE A COMPREHENSIVE LIST FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR, TO BE UPDATED AS NEEDED. THIS WOULD INCLUDE VISITS OF WARSHIPS IN ADDITION TO SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH VESSELS UNDER USG CONTROL. WE APPRECIATE THKH SOME VISITS ARE SCHEDULED ON AN AD HOC BASIS AND CANNOT BE PREDICTED FAR IN ADVANCE. WE WILL, AS WE HAVE IN THE PAST, CONTINUE TO TRY TO BE FORTHCOMING IN MEETING SUCH REQUESTS. HOWEVER, EYERE MUST BE ONE POINT IN THE USG WHICH CAN PULL TOGETHER THE KIND OF ADVANCE NOTIFICATION SCHEDULE THAT WE FIND SO NECESSARY.

7. FOR BOTH THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REASONS NOTED ABOVE, WE ALSO RECOMMEND THAT WE PUT A LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF DAYS PER QUARTER THAT WE SHOULD ASK THE GOP TO PROVIDE CRITICAL PIER SPACE FOR USN SHIPS. WE BELIEVE FIFTEEN DAYS PER QUARTER OF PIER SPACE IS REASONABLE, WOULD NOT ENTAIL TOO GREAT A FINANCIAL LOSS TO THE GOP, AND WOULD STRIKE A GOOD POLITICAL BALANCE BETWEEN THE BENEFITS AND DISADVANTAGES TO THE GOP F A US NAVAL PRESENCE IN

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KARACHI. THIS WOULD REPRESENT A 25 PERCENT INCREASE OVER THE AMOUNT OF PIER TIME WE HAD IN 1976 AND SEEMS REASONABLE TO US. WE WOULD EXPECT THAT IF MIDEASTFOR TERMINATES ITS HOME-PORTING ARRANGEMENT IN BAHRAIN AND THE NEW FORMAT ENTAILS A GREATER NUMBER OF VISITS TO KARACHI, THESE VISITS AS WELL WOULD ALSO BE INCLUDED UNDER THE 15 DAYS PER QUARTER CEILING. WE REALIZE THAT SUCH CEILINGS CANNOT BE HARD AND FAST, AND IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS WE WOULD HAVE TO SHOW SOME FLEXIBILITY. WE WOULD HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT IF THE RECOMMENDATION IS ACCEPTED, ALL WOULD MAKE A GOOD FAITH EFFORT TO MEET THE REQUIREMENT.

8. THE QUESTION OF USN SHIPS STAYING AT ANCHORAGE OFF KARACHI RATHER THAN AT PIER SIDE IS NOT AS PRESSING AS THE BERTHING ISSUE.

THE GOP SUFFERS NO ECONOMIC LOSS WHEN USN SHIPS ARE AT ANCHORAGE, AND THE POLITICAL PROFILE IS SOMEWHAT LOWER. ALSO, LOGISTIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE DEMANDS ON THE GOP FROM SHIPS AT ANCHORAGE ARE LOWER AS WELL. WE THEREFORE SEE NO IMMEDIATE NEED TO ESTABLISH A CEILING ON TIME SPENT IN ANCHORAGE BY USN SHIPS. WE MAY HAVE TO REVISE THIS VIEW WHEN WE SEE HOW A NEW SHIP VISIT PROGRAM IS IMPLEMENTED, BUT FOR NOW DO NOT BELIEVE ANY RESTRICTIONS ON ANCHORAGE TIME ARE NEEDED.

9. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS ADDRESSEES WOULD CARE TO MAKE ON ABOVE PROPOSALS.
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